

Onomatopoeia

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

onomatopoeia: the use of words whose sounds echo their meanings

HERE'S HOW

Step 1: Listen as you read. Say the text aloud or hear it in your head as you read.

Step 2: Identify onomatopoeia. Listen for words that sound like their meanings.

EXAMPLE buzz, whisper, gargle, murmur, hum, hiss

Step 3: Recognize effects of onomatopoeia. Three main effects are:

- **To bring a scene to life with sensory details:**

EXAMPLE With much clipping, clopping, and clattering, the horses scrabbled along.

- **To create a mood or tone:**

EXAMPLE The front door squeaked open, and Erin tiptoed up the creaking stairs.

- **To create style, originality, and fun:**

EXAMPLE Sneezezy, sneezezy sniffles. Snoozy snuffles too

The only thing to say today is *Achoo, Achooo, AHCHOOO!*

STUDENT LESSON SUMMARY, CONTINUED

EXAMPLE: ONOMATOPOEIA**Onomatopoeia**

The rusty spigot
sputters,
utters
a splutter,
spatters a smattering of drops,
gashes wider;
slash,
splatters,
scatters
spurts,
finally stops sputtering
and splash!
gushes rushes splashes
clear water dashes.

—Eve Merriam

Notes on sound devices:

Sound words like *sputters*, *splutter*, and *spatters* give a sense of the old rusty water spigot barely spitting or dribbling the water.

The poet also offers pleasure, or entertainment, in all these sound words—*splatters*, *scatters*, *spurts*.

The use of one sound per line helps establish a distinctive style.

The rush of similar-sounding onomatopoeic words creates a humorous tone, and a burst of energy.